



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS THUNDERBOLT (PC 12)
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From: Commanding Officer, USS THUNDERBOLT (PC 12)

To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1999

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G, Command Histories

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization

(2) Ship Data and Mission Statement

(3) Brief History

(4) Chronology

(5) Narrative

(6) Supporting Documents [IN CLASS FILE]

(7) Commanding Officer Biography/Photograph

(8) Photograph of Ship

1. In accordance with reference (a), USS THUNDERBOLT (PC 12) Command History for calendar year 1999 is submitted.

2. This document is classified CONFIDENTIAL due to the documents present in enclosure (6).

3. For any further requirements or questions, my point of contact is QM1(SW) (b) (6) COM (b) (6) or DSN (b) (6)

I. R. Pollitt

I. R. POLLITT

USS THUNDERBOLT (PC 12) BRIEF HISTORY

USS THUNDERBOLT was delivered on 05 August 1995 in New Orleans, Louisiana. After completing a rigorous pre-commissioning training cycle, THUNDERBOLT traveled to Penn's Landing, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for her commissioning ceremony on 07 October 1995. From there the ship entered into the Navy's surface ship training and inspection cycle, beginning with the Command Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART I) on 25 October 1995 and ending on 14 May 1997 with the Operational Readiness Evaluation (ORE) where Thunderbolt was evaluated as "excellent" in all areas. Highlights along the way included an overall evaluation of "excellent" after the ship's first operational propulsion plant examination (OPPE) with CINCLANTFLT Propulsion Examining Board (PEB) and several successful weeks of Naval Special Warfare Tactical Training (NSWTT) at Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.

Upon completion of the training cycle THUNDERBOLT began a series of deployments in support of counter drug operations (CD OPS) in the Caribbean. On 28 June 1997 she departed for Key West Florida in support of DIRJIATF EAST on her first CD OP. On 15 July 1996, after several days of training and with a U. S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) embarked, THUNDERBOLT conducted two solid weeks of CD OPS. Upon return to homeport she began preparations for the Mid-Cycle Assessment (MCA) on 19 August 1996. As always, THUNDERBOLT was evaluated as "excellent" in all areas. On 11 October 1996 THUNDERBOLT departed with USS WHIRLWIND (PC 11) for Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico in support of CD OPS under GANTSEC. Being the only U. S. Navy asset on a U. S. Coast Guard Operation, Frontier Shield, THUNDERBOLT was awarded the Coast Guard Meritorious Unit Commendation. After two weeks of CD OPS, USCINCSOC cancelled the remainder of her deployment orders and THUNDERBOLT returned to homeport. On 27 December 1997 THUNDERBOLT was the first Patrol Coastal (PC) to deploy in support of OPBAT, a Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) operation out of Nassau, Bahamas. She provided the first surface asset to support U. S. Coast Guard helicopters and U. S. Army Special Forces on this CD OP. During the operation, THUNDERBOLT provided proof-of-concept for helicopter interoperability. She also rescued a Haitian freighter from shoal water by towing her to safety and providing her with food and water until the Haitian National Authorities assisted her. The remainder of her third CD OP was carried out in support of DIRJIATF EAST. THUNDERBOLT also conducted multiple training exercises with MK V Special Operations Craft, Seal Teams and U.S. Army Special Forces in preparation for a European deployment.

THUNDERBOLT returned to Little Creek from her maiden European deployment on 26 October 1998. While deployed, she successfully completed Combined Joint Operations with the U.S.

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Army Third Special Forces Group and host nation special forces in Dakar, Senegal, Partnership for Peace and NATO exercises in support of BALTOPS 97, and Combined Joint Operations with the Second Marine Expeditionary Force and naval forces of Estonia and Latvia in support of exercise BALTIC CHALLENGE.

THUNDERBOLT's officers and crew then began preparations for change of command which took place on 7 November . LCDR Brad Williamson was relieved by LT Daniel Shaw as Commanding Officer. The ship then closed out the year by proceeding to Colonna's Shipyard for a phased maintenance availability on 24 November to undergo a series of modifications and system upgrades.

In February of 1998, THUNDERBOLT departed Colonna's enroute to Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek for an Operational Test and Evaluation (OT&E) period with the United States Coast Guard. The test marked the first time in the history of the Navy and Coast Guard that a ship was commissioned in both services simultaneously. LCDR Matt Miller, USCG, and a Coast Guard crew manned the ship (designated USCGC THUNDERBOLT, WPC-12). The ships' Navy complement (commanded by LT Shaw) occupied office space at Special Boat Squadron TWO for 3 of the 5 months of the test.

During the OT&E, several crewmembers were able to attend schools. THUNDERBOLT crewmembers also provided over 1000 man hours of volunteer work at the Children's Hospital of the Kings Daughters.

On 17 July, THUNDERBOLT was returned to the United States Navy in a ceremony conducted at Pier 61, Special Boat Squadron TWO, Little Creek Amphibious Base. At this point the now all-Navy crew began to prepare in earnest for the challenges associated with her upcoming deployment. The crew completed the entire inter-deployment training cycle in 10 weeks. They also completed all phases of the training with the highest possible grades. Specific accomplishments included: reduced TSTA I and TSTA II (FTG) from two weeks to 4 days; completion of engineering certification in a mere 6 hours; and full qualification in Naval Special Warfare capabilities (including water drop zone).

Upon completion of Naval Special Warfare Tactical Training and another Operational Readiness Examination, THUNDERBOLT commenced pre-overseas movement preparations. The crew was able to take leave. Additionally, upgrades were made to the command & control suite.

On 16 November, THUNDERBOLT departed Little Creek enroute to SOUTHCOM for her second major deployment. THUNDERBOLT transited the Panama Canal for the first time on 23 November 1998, enroute La Union, El Salvador to conduct combined training with El Salvador Naval Forces. This was the first time a United States Navy ship visited this port, and the visit marked significant improvement in relations between the United States and El Salvador.

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In mid December, THUNDERBOLT participated in CD OPS with the country of Panama. THUNDERBOLT therefore rang in the new year in port Rodman, Panama. A good portion of the SOUTHCOM deployment was spent in and out of Panama in support of OPERATION CONJUNTOS and dedicated support for Seal Team FOUR.

On 02 February 1999, the ship transited the Panama Canal for the second time to conduct training with the Colombian Guardia Costas del Atlantico. THUNDERBOLT arrived in Cartagena, Colombia on 03 February and trained with the Colombian Navy until 19 February. Training included; CRRC/VBSS, Small Boat OPS/Repair, Small Arms Exercises and Field Medical/First Aid Procedures. While in port, the crew held duty section fire drills, performed maintenance, and continued ships preservation.

Upon completion of training, the crew enjoyed a three day port visit in Cartagena before departing for Colon, Panama for mission de-brief and to drop off Seal Team FOUR members.

On 27 February 1999, THUNDERBOLT completed training in Panama and departed for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba to embark USCG LEDET 5A for CD OPS in the Caribbean Sea. During this evolution THUNDERBOLT assisted the USCGC ESCANABA in capturing a suspected drug laden go-fast vessel by firing a five round burst of warning shots across its bow.

On 13 March, while enroute to San Juan, Puerto Rico, the Commanding Officer (LCDR Shaw) was stricken with an acute case of appendicitis and was medevac to NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico. LT Steven Urso assumed duties as acting Commanding Officer. On 14 March, THUNDERBOLT arrived at NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads for maintenance, crew rest and to participate in the ongoing Counter Drug Operation CARIB VENTURE.

During this operation, THUNDERBOLT encountered an abandoned go-fast off the coast of Roosevelt Roads. THUNDERBOLT crewmembers made repairs and towed it back to NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads. The ship continued CD OPS in the Caribbean until the conclusion of the SOUTHCOM deployment.

THUNDERBOLT headed home after a very successful deployment and made a brief stop in Miami, FL. for crew rest. She arrived at NAB Little Creek, VA on 14 April 1999, and the crew went on a well deserved leave and stand down period until 16 May 1999.

During the months of May and June, the ship remained moored at NAB Little Creek for post deployment and upkeep phase, to prepare for the up-coming training periods.

07 July 1999, LCDR Daniel Shaw was relieved by LCDR Ian R. Pollitt as Commanding Officer. Due to operational requirements, however, the Change of Command Ceremony was delayed until 30 July.

From the beginning of August until mid September the crew had time to attend schools, work on PQS, conduct maintenance, and update ship's systems. On 14 September, however, crew training was cut short in support of a late-notice sortie to evade

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Hurricane Floyd. THUNDERBOLT headed north toward Annapolis, MD, then on to the old Naval Shipyard in Philadelphia, PA to weather the storm.

THUNDERBOLT returned to NAB Little Creek on 17 September, and departed for Annapolis, MD to act as a backdrop for the Naval Surface Warfare Development Group Detachment Annapolis Decommissioning Ceremony, stopping at Hannibal range for a Gunnery Exercise while enroute.

On 27 September, THUNDERBOLT embarked family members for a Dependent's Day cruise. Departing Annapolis, MD in the early morning hours, the ship detoured to Hannibal Target again to conduct a live fire demonstration. Following the gunnery exercise, FA (b) (6) injured his right hand on the turning flywheel of #2 MPDE while standing watch in the aft engine room. The ship came to full power and raced home to expedite FA (b) (6) emergency medical care.

Over the next few weeks the crew continued to attend schools and qualify with small arms to prepare for up coming NSWTT at NAVSTA Station Roosevelt Roads.

On 19 October THUNDERBOLT departed Little Creek in company with USS WHIRLWIND enroute NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads for NSWTT. A brief stop for fuel was made on 22 October in Key West, FL. This allowed both ships to determine the best track to Puerto Rico due to hurricane warnings in the area.

The next day THUNDERBOLT was underway enroute Roosevelt Roads. THUNDERBOLT arrived safely on 26 October ready for training. The crew was eager to learn, and did a fantastic job handling all exercises, despite the intense heat. During NSWTT the crew conducted Underway Replenishment with USNS LARAMIE, RAS/TOW-EX with 2 11 meter RHIB's, several gunnery exercises, Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations, Drop Zone Support for EODMU 6, VBSS/MIO training, Small Arms exercises and CBR Decontamination Training. At the conclusion of NSWTT on 10 November, the crew enjoyed a two-day port visit in St. Thomas, and then departed for Little Creek, VA with a BSF at NAVSTA Mayport, Florida. THUNDERBOLT arrived NAB Little Creek, VA on 18 November. The next day THUNDERBOLT departed for Cherry Point OPAREA to conduct a Hydro-Graphic Survey and a VBSS Practical in support of SEAL Team Eight G/H Platoon's ORE. THUNDERBOLT returned to NAB Little Creek on 20 November for some long overdue R&R,s and the crew relished the opportunity for a few days off to celebrate Thanksgiving with their families.

On 05 December THUNDERBOLT departed Little Creek for Morehead City, NC in support of Joint Task Force Exercise (JTFEX) 00-1. One exciting moment during the training occurred on 12 December, when THUNDERBOLT collided with ROBOSKI, a remote-controlled jet ski simulating an approaching small boat threat. ROBOSKI went DIW directly in front of the ship due to a loss of R/C signal from her support craft, and the ship could not adjust

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course quickly enough maneuver around it. THUNDERBOLT was undamaged in the incident, however ROBOSKI did not fare as well. Following substantial fiberglass and cosmetic repairs ROBOSKI was returned to service a few days later. On 15 December THUNDERBOLT headed north to NAB Little Creek, VA and entered holiday stand-down. Stand down was uneventful, highlighted by no significant problems with the dreaded Y2K bug.

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1999 CHRONOLOGY

- A. January 01- In port Rodman, Panama for the Holidays, Maintenance and upkeep.
- B. January 02-14 - Underway from Rodman, Panama in support of Conjuntos 99-1. USCG LEDET boards Manteno Huancavilca 1 in search of drugs, negative results.
- C. January 08 - Anchored in the Bay of Panama. Enroute to Rodman, Panama. Arrive Rodman, Panama.
- D. January 09 - Underway from Rodman, Panama in support of Conjuntos 99-1.
- E. January 10 - Anchored in the Gulf of Panama for swim call.
- F. January 12 - Anchored in the Gulf of Panama. Underway from Anchorage.
- G. January 14 - Arrived Rodman, Panama.
- H. January 14-20 - Inport Rodman, Panama for maintenance and upkeep.
- I. January 20 - Underway from Rodman, Panama to conduct Drop Zone Exercise. Recovered 17 jumpers and 2 Combat Rubber Raiding Craft (CRRC). Anchored in the Gulf of Panama.
- J. January 21 - Underway from anchorage to conduct Flight Operations/Fast Rope Exercise with SEAL Team FOUR "G" Platoon. Returned to Rodman, Panama.
- K. January 22-01 - In port Rodman, Panama for maintenance and upkeep. Conducted fire drills on in port duty sections.
- L. February 01-02 - Underway from Rodman, Panama enroute Colon, Panama via the Panama Canal.
- M. February 02 - Anchored in Limon Bay, Colon, Panama after transiting Panama Canal.
- N. February 02-03 - Underway from anchorage Colon, Panama enroute to Cartagena, Colombia.
- O. February 03-22 - Arrived Cartagena, Colombia. Conducted Training Mission CN-9117.
- P. February 23 - Underway from Cartagena, Colombia enroute to Colon, Panama for a SEAL team exercise.
- Q. February 24-25 - Anchored at Bahia Las Minas. Conducted an Over the Horizon insertion and extraction. Arrived Colon, Panama.
- R. February 26 - In port Colon, Panama for maintenance, upkeep and crew rest.
- S. February 27 - Underway from Colon, Panama enroute Guantanamo Bay Cuba.
- T. March 1 - Arrived Guantanamo Bay Cuba. Embarked USCG LEDET 5A.

- U. March 2-3 - In port Guantanamo Bay Cuba for maintenance, upkeep and crew rest.
- V. March 3 - Underway from Guantanamo Bay Cuba enroute the Caribbean Sea for counter drug operations (CD OPS). Anchored near Navassa Island.
- W. March 4 - Conducted Navy wide E-5 Exams. Continued CD OPS patrol.
- X. March 7-9 - Port visit Montego Bay, Jamaica.
- Y. March 10-13 - Underway from Montego Bay, Jamaica enroute to the Caribbean Sea for CD OPS.
- Z. March 11 - Assisted USCGC ESCANAWBA in tracking a Go-Fast. Spotted the vessel and fired a 5 round burst of warning shots over the bow of the Go-fast.
- AA. March 13 - While enroute to San Juan, Puerto Rico for a port visit, the Commanding Officer is stricken with appendicitis. USCG helicopter 6576 from Puerto Rico conducted medevac. LT Steven J. Urso is acting CO. The ship is directed to go to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads.
- BB. March 14-19 - In port Naval Station Roosevelt Roads for maintenance, upkeep and crew rest.
- CC. March 16 - RM2 (b) (6) returned from deserter status.
- DD. March 17 - Conducted Safety Standdown.
- EE. March 19-24 - Underway from Naval Station Roosevelt Roads enroute to the Caribbean Sea for counter drug ops Carib Venture 99-1.
- FF. March 23 - Conducted Gunnery Exercise.
- GG. March 25-27 - In port, Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico for USS WHIRLWIND Change of Command, maintenance and upkeep.
- HH. March 27 - Underway enroute to the Caribbean Sea for Carib Venture 99-1 CD OPS.
- II. March 28 - Spotted an abandoned Go-fast. USCG LEDET and THUNDERBOLT crew members boarded Go-fast, made repairs and towed it to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico. Arrived Naval Station Roosevelt Roads.
- JJ. March 28-30 - In port Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico for maintenance and upkeep.
- KK. March 30 - Underway enroute to the Caribbean Sea for Caribe Venture 99-1.
- LL. March 31 - Arrived Ponce, Puerto Rico for maintenance and upkeep.
- MM. April 01-05 - In port Ponce, Puerto Rico. Painted the ship for return to Little Creek, VA.

NN. April 06 - Underway from Ponce, Puerto Rico enroute to the Caribbean Sea for CD OPS. Conducted Engineering Casualty Control Drills.

OO. April 07-09 - Transited from Puerto Rico to Miami, FL. Conducted Small Arms Gun Exercise.

PP. April 09-11 - Port visit in Miami, FL.

QQ. April 12 - THUNDERBOLT crew members assist in a fuel oil spill on the pier of approximately 250 gallons. Underway from Miami, FL enroute to Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek.

RR. April 14 - Arrived Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, VA after a successful 5 month deployment.

SS. April 15-29 - Commenced Leave and Stand down period I.

TT. April 30-May 17 - Commenced Leave and Stand down period II.

UU. May 17-June 01 - In port NAB Little Creek, VA for post deployment maintenance and upkeep.

VV. May 23-26 - Received ETG courtesy visit and Ordnance Handling Safety Visit.

WW. May 28 - LT (b) (6) detaches from THUNDERBOLT.

XX. June 02 - Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA enroute to the VACAPES for a Detailer underway demo. Returned to NAB Little Creek, VA.

YY. June 03-July 02 - Conducted post deployment maintenance and upkeep.

ZZ. June 23 - ENC (b) (6) retires from the U.S. Navy.

AAA. July 5 - Holiday routine in recognition of Independence Day.

BBB. July 6-9 - Conducted hull cleaning and preparations for Change of Command.

CCC. July 6 - LCDR Pollitt Assumes Command.

DDD. July 13 - Conducted pier side Engineering Casualty Control Drills.

EEE. July 15 - Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA enroute to Chesapeake Bay to conduct SEAL Team Reunion rehearsal. Returned to Little Creek, VA.

FFF. July 17 - Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA. enroute to Chesapeake Bay to conduct Seal Team Reunion presentation. Conducted Small Arms demonstration. Arrived NAB Little Creek, VA.

GGG. July 19-23 - Conducted Inclination Experiment.

HHH. July 26-28 - IBS Upgrade installed.

III. July 28 - Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA enroute to Chesapeake Bay for Damage Control Training. Conducted Engineering

Casualty Control Drills. Arrived NAB Little Creek, VA.

JJJ. July 30 - Conducted Change Of Command Ceremony.

KKK. August 05-06 - Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA. enroute Chesapeake Bay and Cape Henry area for Privateer calibration.

LLL. August 09-20 - BOBCAT installed.

MMM. August 11 - Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA. Enroute Chesapeake Bay for SEAL Team TWO drop zone exercise.

NNN. August 12 - Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA enroute Chesapeake Bay for NAV Check-ride review.

OOO. August 16-20 - LAN installation.

PPP. September 6 - LABOR Day Holiday.

QQQ. September 9 - Conducted Navy wide E-4 Exam.

RRR. September 14 - Underway from NAB Little Creek enroute Annapolis, Maryland for Hurricane FLOYD storm evasion. Arrived United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland. Conducted Navy wide E-5 Exam.

SSS. September 15 - Underway from Annapolis enroute Philadelphia Naval Shipyard for Hurricane Floyd storm evasion.

TTT. September 16 - Arrived Philadelphia Naval Shipyard. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Conducted Navy wide E-6 Exam.

UUU. September 17 - Underway from Philadelphia Naval Shipyard enroute NAB Little Creek, VA. Arrive NAB Little Creek VA.

VVV. September 24 - Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA. enroute Annapolis, MD. Conducted small arms GUNNEX at Hannibal Range. Arrived Worthington Basin, Annapolis, MD.

WWW. September 27 - Underway from Annapolis, MD. enroute NAB Little Creek, VA for Dependent's Day Cruise and small arms GUNNEX at Hannibal Range. Arrived NAB Little Creek, VA.

XXX. September 29 - Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA. enroute VACAPES for SEAL training. Return NAB Little Creek, VA.

YYY. October 01 - Berth shift to other side of pier 61 NAB Little Creek, VA.

ZZZ. October 05 - Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA. Enroute VACAPES OPAREA for GUNNEX and RAS with USS OAK HILL. Return to NAB Little Creek, VA.

AAAA. October 10 - Christening ceremony for (b) (6)
Conducted in ship's pilothouse. First baby Christened using ship's bell.

BBBB. October 12-15 - NSWTT-CRRC training.

CCCC. October 19 - Berth shifted from Pier 61W enroute Pier 16N and back to Pier 61W NAB Little Creek for re-fueling.

DDDD. October 20 - Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA enroute Naval Station Roosevelt Roads via Key West, FL for NSWTT.

CCCC. October 22 - Arrive Mole Pier, Berth 6, Truman Annex. Key West, FL for re-fueling.

DDDD. October 23 - Underway from Key West, FL. enroute Naval Station Roosevelt Roads.

EEEE. October 26 - Arrived Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, PR for NSWTT.

FFFF. October 27 - Underway from Roosevelt Roads to OPAREA. RTP Navsta Roosevelt Roads, PR.

GGGG. October 28 - Underway from Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, PR. to OPAREA for NSWTT. Returned to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads.

HHHH. October 29 - Underway from Naval Station Roosevelt Roads to OPAREA. Returned to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads.

IIII. November 01 - Underway from Naval Station Roosevelt Roads to Pineros Island OPAREA for UNREP/TOWEX with 11M RHIBs. Conducted GUNNEX at outer range W-368. Returned to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads.

JJJJ. November 02 - AMMO onload. Underway from Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, PR. enroute NSRR beaches for NEO walk through. Returned to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads.

KKKK. November 03 - Underway from Naval Station Roosevelt Roads enroute PROA for RAS with USNS LARAMIE. Returned to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads.

LLLL. November 04, 1999 Underway from Naval Station Roosevelt Roads enroute Pineros Island for Drop Zone/EOD exercise. Ship proceeded to anchorage for NEO exercise. Returned to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads.

MMMM. November 05 - Underway from Naval Station Roosevelt Roads enroute PROA for GUNNEX. Returned to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads.

NNNN. November 06 - VBSS and CRRC teams shoot small arms at NSRR gun Range.

OOOO. November 08 - Underway enroute PROA for VBSS training. Returned to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads.

PPPP. November 09 - Crew assembled at NSWU-4 for CBR training.

QQQQ. November 10 - Underway from Naval Station Roosevelt Roads Enroute NSRR beaches for CBR training. Upon completion of Training the ship concluded NSWTT at Naval station Roosevelt Roads and transited to ST. Thomas, Virgin Islands for port visit and crew rest.

RRRR. November 10-12 - Port visit, ST. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

SSSS. November 11 - Ship celebrates Veterans Day.

TTTT. November 12 - Underway from ST. Thomas, Virgin Islands enroute Little Creek via Mayport, Florida for re-fueling.

UUUU. November 16 - Arrive Naval station Mayport, FL.

VVVV. November 17 - Underway from Naval Station Mayport, FL enroute NAB Little Creek, VA.

UUUU. November 18 - Arrive NAB Little Creek.

VVVV. November 19-20 - Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA enroute Cherry Point Operating Area for LCU OPS, VBSS/CRRC training with SEAL team EIGHT, and ORE.

WWWW. November 20 - Arrive NAB Little Creek, VA.

XXXX. November 22 - Holiday routine for crew rest.

YYYY. November 25-26 - Holiday routine for Thanksgiving.

ZZZZ. December 05 - Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA enroute Morehead City, NC for JTFEX 00-1.

AAAAA. December 05-15 - JTFEX Cherry Point OPAREA, Moorehead City, NC.

BBBBB. December 12 - Ship collides with ROBOSKI, a remote-controlled jetski, when the jet ski lost R/C signal from its control platform and went DIW in front of the ship. THUNDERBOLT tasked at the time to protect ARG assets from small boat threats.

CCCCC. December 15 - Underway from Moorehead City, NC. Enroute NAB Little Creek, VA. Arrived NAB Little Creek, VA.

DDDDD. December 17 - Commenced Holiday Stand down.

EEEE. December 18-31 - Holiday Stand down.

NARRATIVE

THUNDERBOLT brought in the New Year in port NAVSTA Rodman, Panama. Just after the celebrations, on 02 January 1999, the ship was underway for the cooperative CD OP CONJUNTOS 99-1. During this operation, the ship sighted a suspected Narco-trafficking vessel and pursued it. A boarding was conducted with negative results. The ship returned to Rodman for fuel on 09 January. THUNDERBOLT was underway on 09 January and returned on 14 January after completion of CONJUNTOS 99-1.

From 14-20 January, THUNDERBOLT carried out a much needed maintenance period. Work was conducted on various engineering equipment as well as correcting casualties to the ship's C4I systems. Just after wrapping up the maintenance period, the ship set sail for SEAL Team inter-operability training with the deployed platoon at Naval Special Warfare Unit EIGHT. The training encompassed insertion/extraction techniques, Fast Rope and Drop Zone exercises. After all the training was complete THUNDERBOLT's tired crew returned to Rodman, Panama on 21 January.

22 January through 01 February was spent in Rodman, Panama for crew rest prior to the canal transit.

01 February, late in the evening the ship set sail for Cartagena, Colombia. This involved a nine hour transit through the three constricted locks and large lake areas of the Panama Canal. The ship set a record for fastest transit speed in the Canal, 35 knots in Gatun Lake. Approximately 0430 the ship anchored in Limon Bay, Cristobal Station for crew rest prior to proceeding on to Colombia. THUNDERBOLT picked up anchor and departed Limon Bay at approximately 1200 on 02 February, for what turned out to be one of the worst transits in the ship's history. The sustained seas from the breakwater of Limon Bay to the breakwater of Cartagena, Colombia were 12 - 14 feet on the starboard bow. Nearly the entire crew suffered seasickness.

The ship arrived in Cartagena on 03 February after 24 straight hours of being tossed around. The crew enjoyed two days of liberty and rest prior to commencing our training mission with the Guardia Costas del Atlantico on 06 February.

The Counter Narcotics Training Mission (CN 9117) was carried out from 06 - 20 February. The training provided to the host nation was tailored to their specific desires and included: VBSS, small arms fire exercises and maintenance, small boat navigation and maintenance, field medical technician/first aid and navigation records. The exercise closed with a ceremony on 20 February followed by a reception on the Cartagena Naval Base. The Commanding Officer and Operations Officer traveled to the

embassy in Bogota 21-23 February to debrief the MILGRU on the success of CN-9117.

The ship set sail for Limon Bay once again on 24 February to drop off the embarked SEAL Squad prior to shifting Operational Control Back to Joint Inter-Agency Task Force East in support of the CD OPS. 25 February the ship moored in Limon Bay and the SEALs debarked. The Commanding Officer and Operations Officer debriefed the General's staff at SOUTHCOM Headquarters in Corozal, Panama.

On 27 February THUNDERBOLT departed for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba in order to embark a Coast Guard LEDET ISO CD OPS in the Caribbean.

On 01 March THUNDERBOLT arrived in Guantanamo Bay and embarked Coast Guard LEDET 5A. The ship remained in port until 03 March for crew rest. On March 3rd THUNDERBOLT left port and proceeded to anchorage a few hundred yards off the coast of Navassa Island where the E-5 Navy Wide Advancement Exams were held. Just after the Exams were completed THUNDERBOLT pulled the anchor and set out for patrol of the Caribbean in the vicinity of Haiti and Cuba.

07 March THUNDERBOLT arrived in Montego Bay Jamaica for a port visit. On 10 March, After 2½ days of rest and relaxation with the tourists during spring break '99, THUNDERBOLT set sail for patrol of the Caribbean in support of Caribe Venture 99-1.

11 March THUNDERBOLT received a call from USCGC ESCANABA requesting assistance in pursuing a suspected Go-Fast. The vessel was heading for Jamaican territorial waters at 30-35 knots. THUNDERBOLT rendezvoused with ESCANABA and chased the Go-Fast for three hours. The suspected narco-traffickers did not stop until THUNDERBOLT fired 5 warning shots across their bow. The personnel on board were detained until ESCANABA arrived and took over as On-Scene Tactical Commander. THUNDERBOLT then continued with her patrol.

THUNDERBOLT was scheduled for a port visit in San Juan, Puerto Rico from 14-19 March. While transiting the Mona Passage on 13 March enroute to San Juan, the Commanding Officer suffered acute appendicitis. A Coast Guard Dolphin helicopter was called in from U.S. Coast Guard Greater Antilles Section (GANTSEC) for a Heliborne Medevac. The Captain was successfully lifted off the deck and transferred to Naval Hospital Roosevelt Roads. The ship was diverted from San Juan to NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads. THUNDERBOLT arrived early morning of 14 March. The down time was used to make repairs to machinery, topside preservation and conduct a Safety Stand down. On 16 March, RM2 (b) (6) returned from a deserter status.

19 March THUNDERBOLT set sail once again for an uneventful patrol of the Caribbean. The patrol lasted for 5 days and

THUNDERBOLT moored at NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads to participate in the Change of Command of its sister ship, USS WHIRLWIND.

27 Mar THUNDERBOLT once again set sail for the Caribbean in search of drug traffickers. The underway period was cut short when the crew spotted an abandoned Go-Fast south of Puerto Rico. The ship approached and boarded the vessel, and towed it back to NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads. The 28th through the 30th was spent pier side Roosevelt Roads.

March 30 the ship made a transit from Roosevelt Roads to Ponce, Puerto Rico. The Ponce visit from 01 - 05 April was scheduled in order to paint the sides for our homecoming. After celebrating Easter in southern Puerto Rico, THUNDERBOLT slipped lines and proceeded out to the Caribbean for a two-day patrol before being detached from JIATF-East to proceed home.

On 07 April THUNDERBOLT shifted OPCON to Commander Special Boat Squadron TWO and proceeded to Miami, Florida for one last port visit and a little fuel.

09 - 11 April were days of holiday routine. The crew took in some sun and toured the city of Miami. The time had come to depart Miami and head for home. On 12 April, while the ship was setting the Special Sea and Anchor Detail, a contractor was removing a generator and its fuel tank from the pier when the fuel tank ruptured, spreading 250 gallons of diesel fuel on the pier. THUNDERBOLT's crew acted fast by stopping the leak and containing the spill, preventing it from entering the beautiful waters of Miami. The ship then set sail for the short voyage home.

14 April, the day the crew had been waiting for, dawned and found THUNDERBOLT just outside the jetties of Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek. A short ceremony was held to award the Operations and Weapons Officers Navy Achievement Medals for their efforts on the deployment. THUNDERBOLT then slid into port and was put down for a much needed rest at pier 61W.

15 April began the post overseas movement and leave and stand down period.

May 17th the crew returned and the work for the upcoming events commenced.

THUNDERBOLT remained in port until 02 June, when she hosted Detailers from the Bureau of Naval personnel for a day underway. This proved an excellent opportunity to demonstrate firsthand the rigors of PC life and gave the detailers a much clearer understanding of what life is like aboard the Navy's smallest commissioned warships. Evolutions conducted included Sea and Anchor Detail, CRRC/Small Boat Operations, Gunnery exercises and damage control drills. THUNDERBOLT returned to port later that day.

THUNDERBOLT remained in port for the remainder of June conducting maintenance and allowing crew members to participate in schools and training.

On 23 June the Command Chief, ENC(SW) (b) (6) retired and was transferred to the Fleet Reserves.

On 01 July LT Ian R. Pollitt reported for duty as the Commanding Officer's relief. He was promoted to LCDR just after arriving. The Change of Command Ceremony was set for 30 July. Due to operational requirements, LCDR Shaw was needed to relieve the Commanding Officer of USS FIREBOLT. A short fused Change of Command was conducted and LCDR Pollitt assumed Command of USS THUNDERBOLT effective 06 July 1999.

The ship set sail for LCDR Pollitt's first underway on 15 July for a SEAL Team Reunion dress rehearsal off the coast of Fort Story. 16 July was the reunion and USS THUNDERBOLT raced past the assembled crowd of 10,000 or so at a range of 350 yards, throwing up a tremendous bow wave at 35 knots, with guns blazing—a vivid demonstration of the power of a Patrol Coastal.

05 - 06 August was spent circling the SESEF buoy in Chesapeake Bay in order to calibrate the Privateer System. The ship returned on 06 August with the casualty to Privateer corrected. THUNDERBOLT spent the day of 11 August underway covering an airdrop exercise for SEAL Team TWO.

The remainder of August was spent in port in order to replace the ship's ELINT system with the upgraded BOBCAT system. Training for Naval Special Warfare Tactics was conducted for selected crew members at FT A.P. Hill which involved physical fitness and small arms training on .45 cal, M-4, M-14, 7.62MM, .50 cal, and 25MM weapons.

The training at FT A.P. Hill had to be cut short when Hurricane Floyd threatened the eastern seaboard. THUNDERBOLT recalled the crew, slipped lines and transited to Annapolis, MD on 14 September along with 5 other PC's. On 15 September, as the storm moved closer, THUNDERBOLT followed the other PC's through the Chesapeake/Delaware Canal to Philadelphia, PA in search of improved safe haven. THUNDERBOLT remained in Philadelphia until 17 September. When the storm passed the ship set sail for NAB Little Creek, VA.

On 24 September the ship headed for Annapolis, MD once again. This time it was to be used as a backdrop for the decommissioning ceremony of Naval Surface Warfare Development Group Detachment Annapolis. The ship arrived on 24 September and prepared for the ceremony on the 25th. The crew used the time to relax and took in sports and the nightlife. On 27 September the hosted a dependent's cruise from Annapolis to NAB Little Creek, VA. During the transit, THUNDERBOLT stopped at Hannibal Range for a gunnery exercise. Following a highly

successful gun shoot, FA (b) (6) mangled his right hand while wiping lube oil off of an operating main propulsion diesel engine too close to the flywheel. The ship rang up 35 knots and maintained that speed until it approached the jetties of Little Creek. Emergency medical services were standing by for the ship's arrival and took FA (b) (6) to the hospital.

THUNDERBOLT assisted SEAL Team FOUR "F" platoon with their Operational Readiness Exam (ORE) on 29 September by inserting them off the coast of Damneck, VA in OPAREA W-50.

October 5th THUNDERBOLT was scheduled to conduct a gunnery exercise in VACAPES and an astern refueling with USS OAK HILL. As the ship left port, OAK HILL anchored due to communications problems. THUNDERBOLT proceeded to VACAPES and conducted the gunnery exercises then returned to NAB Little Creek.

THUNDERBOLT remained in port for about two weeks conducting Combat Rubber Raiding Craft (CRRC) training and preparing for a short trip to NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads to conduct phase II of the Naval Special Warfare Tactical Training (NSWTT). On 10 October (b) (6) the Weapons Officer's son, was baptized in the ship's bell.

On 20 October THUNDERBOLT in company with USS WHIRLWIND left NAB Little Creek for NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads. Both ships stopped in Key West, Florida for one day in order to take on fuel on October 22. October 23-26 was spent transiting the Old Bahama Channel enroute to Puerto Rico.

THUNDERBOLT arrived at NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads on 26 October for NSWTT. The ship spent the next month there conducting type training to certify the crew and the ship for an upcoming deployment. Training conducted consisted of small arms exercises, at sea gunnery exercises, non-combatant evacuation operations (NEO), airdrops, ELINT operations, close air support, MK V refueling/towing and chemical biological defense techniques. On November 10th the ship left Roosevelt Roads to conduct CBR training, then headed to ST. Thomas for a port visit after a long month of training. THUNDERBOLT remained in ST. Thomas until 12 November.

12 November THUNDERBOLT transited the Old Bahama Channel a second time, arriving in Mayport, Florida on 16 November for fuel. THUNDERBOLT left Mayport on 17 November and arrived in Little Creek on 18 November. She remained in port until midnight on the 19th, when she slipped lines yet again and headed south to Cherry Point Operating Area (CPOA) with SEAL Team Eight "G" Platoon. Both the crew and the embarked platoon conducted an ORE, which involved a hostile boarding of surface vessel and a beach hydrographic survey. THUNDERBOLT returned to NAB Little Creek on 20 November in time for the crew to celebrate Thanksgiving Day with their families.

05-15 December was spent in and out of Morehead City, North Carolina in support of Joint Task Force Exercise 00-1. THUNDERBOLT sat pierside for much of the exercise as most of the SOF play was assigned to airborne assets due to deteriorating weather conditions at sea. In the exercise's final days, the ship CHOPPED to the embarked DESRON commander and was used as a Surface Action Group (SAG) asset. On 12 December THUNDERBOLT was protecting the landing forces from small boat threats when a radio-controlled jet ski, simulating a threat, sped towards USS OAK HILL. THUNDERBOLT positioned itself between the threat and OAK HILL, when suddenly the jet ski lost its R/C signal and collided with the ship. THUNDERBOLT was undamaged, however the jet ski required considerable repair before being returned to service.

THUNDERBOLT returned from JTFEX 00-1 on 15 December and sent the crew on holiday leave and stand down. The ship closed out the year with half the crew enjoying well-deserved time off with family and friends.